Jeff Wilson
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. (AP) — Paradise is not lost, but it’s in flames — again.

The seasonal wildfires that menace this idyllic coastal city roared to life earlier than usual but with all-too-familiar fervor, burning mansions to their foundations and forcing more than 13,000 to flee. Dozens of homes were destroyed, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said.

"I knew it was time to leave," said Tom Morse, 62, a day after he dashed off his motorhome as the fire raced his Mission Canyon Heights house. "I could see the flames getting close."

The fire was just the latest to ravage the area known as the American Riviera, home to screen stars, former presidents and Oprah Winfrey. The blaze reached the burn area of another wildfire that just six months ago destroyed about 200 homes in Santa Barbara and Montecito.

The latest 1,300-acre fire remained out of control and firefighters were on alert for a predicted return of a “sundowner” — fierce winds that sweep down late in the day from the Santa Ynez Mountains towering close behind Santa Barbara.

A sundowner on Wednesday afternoon turned a slumbering brush fire on rugged slopes above the city into a towering wildfire that hurled flames into homes and spit embers into more distant neighborhoods.

Some 3,400 homes were evacuated, and another 13,000 people were advised to be ready to leave.

"It started firestorming dramatically," said Gregg Patroney, a lifelong Santa Barbara resident who grabbed a hose and started wetting his roof when he saw other houses ablaze.

"The fire got within 200 to 300 feet of my house."

"There was a lot of pressure to leave," he said. "Police wanted me out and I got a frantic call from my sister, who was walking up the hill to get me. So I packed up the car and see Fire, page 2.

Kelly Griggs elected president

Matt Fountain
MUSTANG DAILY

Cal Poly students will have a new “direct student liaison” next year in Kelly Griggs. The art and design senior was elected as 2009-2010 Associated Students Inc. president with the platform of being a link between the administration and the student body.

Griggs was elected president after Wednesday and Thursday’s election, with a voter turnout of over 30 percent of the student body. Due to a problem with the outside vendor who was contracted to count the votes, a numerical breakdown of the votes was not available by press time.

The results were announced at 8:50 p.m. Thursday evening before a crowd of approximately 200 students in the University Union Plaza during May Mayhem, a school-sponsored activity night.

Griggs said after the announcement that she was glad her message resonated with the student body.

"I think I really did my research and that has to do with the leadership positions I’ve held and I was able to build my platform off the issues that I feel the students really want and connect with," she said.

"I know that I had a lot of support, great friends and a really good network of people (helping me). It was a fun process, a fun campaign and it’s just very surreal," Griggs said.

Griggs also said that the campaign and election process was the greatest experience of her college career.

"I just had fun with it," she said. "I felt like every night I would come home, my face would be tired from smiling all day. But it was such a good process, it was honestly the best educational experience that I’ve had so far at this university."

Current ASI president Angela Kramer said after the elections results were announced that she looked forward to continuing to work with Griggs, making her transition to student body president as easy as possible.

"This is why we do elections in May," Kramer said. "It’s a month-long transition process. Everything I’ve worked on this year, I’ve worked really hard to make sure we can transition well."

Kramer said that she was “very proud” of Griggs, adding that she believed Griggs would be a true representative of the student body.

"Kelly is great, she has a phenomenal personality, is a great listener," she said. "This position takes a lot of learning, a lot of growing, and I think she’s going to grow into it quite well. I really do."

Matt Fountain
MUSTANG DAILY

Cal Poly will host Cal State Fullerton this weekend.

IN SPORTS, 8

American forces and Taliban militants involved in the deaths of 147 Afghans.

IN NEWS, 3

Read about campus crime on our interactive online map.
Fire
continued from page 1

left, picking her up on the way.

Nearly 1,400 firefighters from nine fire departments were on the lines, aided by aircraft.

 Authorities reported 10 firefighters injured, including three who sheltered in a house during a firestorm. They were in good condition at a Los Angeles burn center but two faced surgery. Other injuries ranged from smoke inhalation to ankle sprains.

There were no specific numbers available on property losses. Fire officials would not clarify the governor's estimate, saying assessments were still under way.

The city's location on the state's central coast gives it some of the best weather in the world, with temperatures routinely topping out in the 70s, and some of the Pacific Ocean. Now with a population of about 98,000, it dates to the Spanish colonial era of California and a Roman Catholic mission established in the 1780s, is a major tourist draw.

But the geography that gives it beauty and a serene atmosphere, also brings danger. “I'm from the East Coast and at this point I'd rather put up with this than the winter,” said evacuee Jim MacHatcher, 40, an illustrator who returned home to pick up clothes Thursday and motored up Juno Road on a baby blue Piaggio scooter to see the fire.

State Assemblyman Pedro Nava fled Wednesday, with his wife, two dogs and a cat. They tossed pictures, documents and a few days' worth of clothes into a car and went to the home of a friend.

“I've learned how important preparation is for an emergency,” he said. “The public has to be prepared to move, and in Santa Barbara they are prepared. When the police squad car came through with loudspeakers telling us to leave, there was no arguing. And they will all be back.”

Morse, the executive director of the environmental group Global Preservation Projects, said he's not surprised by so many fires, blaming it on global warming.

“Temperatures are rising and humidity levels are dropping. It means more fires,” he said.

Global warming can't be blamed for specific fires, but it creates conditions that foster larger and more frequent wildfires, scientists say.

“A warming climate encourages wildfires through a longer summer period that dries fuels, promoting easier ignition and faster spread,” the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change wrote in 2007.

Hatch, the scooter-riding illustrator, said his wife grew up in Santa Barbara.

“The family thinks this is normal,” he said. “But after living here for 20 years I think the fires are getting worse.”

Elsewhere, a southern New Mexico wildfire destroyed three homes and damaged a fourth near the small mountain community of Tinhorn. It also burned five outbuildings, such as sheds and garages, and 14 vehicles, fire information officer Darlene Hart said. Twenty homes were evacuated.

In southeastern Arizona, winds cooperated Thursday, holding down a wildfire that had destroyed three homes and critically injured a man, officials said. That blaze was 30 percent contained.

In Santa Monica, fire Department Battalion Chief Jose Torres watches as a wildfire flares up in the hills Santa Barbara, Calif. on Wednesday.
An injured Afghan woman from the Bala Baluk, district of Afghanistan, is seen on a bed at the hospital in Farah province of Afghanistan Tuesday.

Rahim Faiez
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sobbing relatives showed U.S. and Afghan investigators demolition buildings and graves in two western villages where a local official said Thursday he collected the names of 147 people killed in a disputed incident involving American forces and Taliban militants.

If local reports of the death toll are confirmed, it would be the deadliest case of civilian casualties in Afghanistan since the 2001 U.S.-led invasion that ousted the Taliban regime.

Although the results of the joint U.S.-Afghan investigation were not expected to be announced until Friday, Afghan officials said the bodies of 147 people killed in a disputed incident involving American forces and Taliban militants.

Al-Akbar Khan, a member of Farah's provincial council who said he helped the joint delegation from Kabul with their examination Thursday, said he collected names of 147 dead — 55 at one site and 92 at another. Khan said he gave his tally to the Kabul provincial council who said he helped the joint delegation.

He said villagers told investigators that many of the dead were buried in mass graves of 20 or so people. Investigators did not exhume the bodies, according to Khan.

Crying family members angrily showed investigators demolished buildings and lines of graves.

"They were pointing to graves and saying, "This is my son, this is my daughter,'" Khan said.

The international Red Cross has said that women and children were among dozens of dead people its teams saw in two villages, where houses lay in ruin following the bombing.

What happened remained a matter of dispute.

U.S. forces ordered airstrikes on Taliban militants after a firefight, but Afghan officials say the bombs killed civilians who were hiding in their homes.

Villagers said they gathered children, women and elderly men in several compounds near the village of Gerani to keep them away from the fighting, but that the compounds were hit by airstrikes.

Three U.S. defense officials, speaking anonymously, said Thursday that it is possible the investigators would find a mix of causes for the deaths — that some were caused by the firefight between the Americans and the Taliban, some by the U.S. airstrike and some deliberately killed by Taliban fighters hoping U.S. bombings would be blamed.

Taliban militants often take over civilian homes and launch attacks on Afghan and coalition forces. U.S. officials say the militants hope to attract U.S. airstrikes that kill civilians, thereby giving the militants a propaganda victory.

U.S. military spokeswoman Capt. Elizabeth Mathias said she did not yet have information on what the investigative team found.

A U.S. brigadier general headed the team, along with Afghan military and police officials.

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Wesleyan students were told to stay in their dorms and the city's only synagogue closed Thursday as police warned that the man wanted in the shooting death of a woman at a bookstore may be bent on killing other students and Jews.

University officials said police told them the suspect expressed threats in his personal journals toward Wesleyan and its Jewish students. An official with knowledge of the investigation told The Associated Press that police confiscated Morgan's car and found a journal in which he spelled out a plan to rape and kill Justin-Jinich before going on a campus shooting spree.

State Briefs

WORD ON THE STREET

"What were the deciding factors on how you voted for the new Associated Students Inc. president?"

"I think I might vote for Jacob since his plans for next year seem doable. Just talking to Jon his plans seem very hopeful... it doesn't seem like his experience as a church leader will help guide him."

- Ken Mangalidan, biology senior

"I voted for Jacob because (Cal Poly) Dems endorsed him."

- Tara Scheuer, biology senior

"I voted for Jon and that came from the fact that I had class with him and he's in my major. He's got what it takes to do the job."

- Henry Phan, computer science

THIS WEEK IN MUSTANG ATHLETICS

BASEBALL

VS. CAL STATE FULLERTON
FRIDAY 6:00PM
SATURDAY 6:00PM
SUNDAY 1:00PM**

BAGGETT STADIUM

** Jersey Day and Post-game base running with the Mustangs: All youth, 13 and under, receive free admission by wearing a jersey to the game and all fans can join the Mustangs following the game to run the bases of Baggett Stadium!"
Bravo replacing ‘Runway’ with ‘The Fashion Show’

Samantha Cricchell
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP) — Generally speaking, a fashion show and a runway go hand in hand. But for TV audiences, they’ll now be rivals.

Bravo is debuting “The Fashion Show” on Thursday (10 p.m. EDT) to fill the void left by “Project Runway,” which bolted to rival Lifetime. Bravo recruited designer Isaac Mizrahi, singer Kelly Rowland and IMG Fashion Vice President Fern Mallis, the force behind much of New York Fashion Week, for its new reality show.

There are a few tweaks to “The Fashion Show.” Each week a winning garment is to be manufactured and sold to the public via an online store; all the designers are professionals; and the winner at the end of the season will have his or her own line available at retail.

However, the similarities to the Heidi Klum-helmed show are striking, too. There are few fashion personalities who could rival the wit and openness of Michael Kors, but Mizrahi probably can. Rowland brings the celebrity element to the show, and Mallis probably has had her share of front-row catwalk seats next to Nina Garcia.

And there is, of course, the weekly challenge.

There’s room for multiple fashion-themed reality shows because it’s an industry that average Joes and Janes are mesmerized by and understand, says Mizrahi, who didn’t name his obvious competitor. The sixth season of “Project Runway” — which has already been taped — will air this summer on Lifetime.

“As a judge, I am looking first for integrity. I can’t tell you about niches that people will fit into, but we have to train them to think properly and then think about the marketplace aspect. The difference with our show from others is that we have an audience that votes every week and they say some brutal things,” Mizrahi says.

Rowland is looking for a spark — and an outfit she’d wear — among the 15 participants, while Mallis says she is eyeing both creativity and practicality. “You have to be able to walk in it, step up a step in it,” Mallis says.

Rowland thinks it’s the judges’ collective perspective that will benefit the wannabe style stars the most.

“We’re all very honest,” she says. “Firm Fern and Honest Isaac, that’s what I call them.”

And her nickname? “Classy Kelly,” says Mallis.

“Because I love him, and I think they all have a lot of tough love,” Mizrahi says. “It’s hard for me. As a judge I couldn’t tell them the polka dots were god awful.”

Lawyer: Suriname promoter admits Braxon scam

Arny Bellor
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PARAMARIBO (AP) — A Suriname promoter acknowledged trying to pass off a Las Vegas-based entertainer as six-time Grammy winner Toni Braxton at a disastrous show dubbed the “Phony Toni” concert by local media, his lawyer said Thursday.

Angel Ventura told a judge he scammed people into paying up to $53 thinking they would hear the famous singer at a much-hyped show in this poor South American country more than two months ago, defense lawyer Lamine Latour told The Associated Press.

“He confessed in front of the investigating judge to the charges and said that he was aware of what he was doing,” Latour said.

The Feb. 28 show ended abruptly after Braxton impersonator Trina Johnson-Finn hit a sour note at the beginning of the second song. She was rushed off the stage to a loud chorus of boos and a volley of trash.

Prosecutors have accused Johnson-Finn, 40, of trying to pass herself off as Braxton, best known for the hit song “Un-Break My Heart” and appearances on ABC’s “Dancing With the Stars.”

She has been in jail for the last two months awaiting a scheduled trial May 26 for allegedly defrauding the nearly 3,000 people who bought tickets — though she says she was an unwitting participant in the scam.

Prosecutor Duncan Nanhoe said the promoter’s confession does not necessarily clear Johnson-Finn.

“Yes, Ventura confessed. But I don’t think that his admission of guilt dummys Johnson as a suspect,” Nanhoe said. It was not immediately clear if Johnstni-Finn and Ventura would be tried together.

Johnson-Finn’s husband, Raymond Finn, said she has augmented her 20-year singing career by impersonating various stars as a “tribute artist” and was also the victim of Venura, who aggressively promoted her as the real Braxton without her knowledge.

The show was the first time she had performed as a Braxon look-a-like, he said. Finn also alleged that Ventura, who was arrested Monday in a bar in Paramaribo, the capital of this small former Dutch colony, pilfered the box office proceeds.

Finn, during a Thursday telephone interview from Washington, where he is getting U.S. politicians such as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Rep. Shelley Berkley of Nevada involved in his case, said he was “ecstatic” that Ventura confessed, but that Nanhoe’s comments made clear his wife’s ordeal in Suriname was far from over.

Meanwhile, police have detained Ventura’s girlfriend, neger jonpon.

Friday, May 8, 2009

www.mustangdaily.net
Always in color
Stop lying to yourself; you're drunk

You know the type. He's had 11 beers in two hours but... I'm not even drunk bro. I don't feel anything.

It's a claim that many college men make when drinking with friends or at the bar. Whether trying to impress a woman or to look like "the man" in front of your friends. I'm here to say just like Jimmy told the Bloods and Crips in South Park, "Come on."

Most of the time these drunkards are so desperate to come off sounding sober that they end up looking like they're drunk. It's really unnecessary. Isn't the whole point of binge drinking to get drunk? Well, revel in your drunkiness then. Don't hide from it.

Trust me, most women aren't impressed by a man who claims to drink a 12-pack of Bud Light in a two-hour sitting before showing up to the party. "I was just pre-gaming," they might say with a shrug to indicate it was a three-weeks-occurrence. "Now I'm going to really start drinking."

Not only is that hot but halfway you've been scheming on not going to see your friends may not either because they'll know the truth. Most of your friends here at Cal Poly have known you for a while. They know you before you started drinking that night. You can't trick them. If you can, they're bad friends who don't pay attention to you sober.

You may be able to trick some random people at a party into believing your body is 65 percent beer and a 12-pack for you is just replenishing your body, but really, what's the point? I'm not going to lie. I've done it. I've fallen prey to the same bravado that is faux sobriety.

"Sure, give me that double shot of tequila after I've had eight beers tonight, maybe it'll make me feel something," I told my roommates a couple weeks ago. I'll spare you the gruesome details but three of us were praying to the porcelain god that night and we only have two toilets so you can figure that one out on your own. If that is evidence of anything, it's that when you're drunk you obviously don't think clearly.

I don't even know who I was trying to impress. At a certain point it becomes ingrained in you that a real man drinks real beer and he feels nothing. My dad thought Milwaukee's Best Light I drink. I'll never be quite the man he was. Still, it's something I've learned to live with. I learned after having my first and only Milwaukee's Best a few years ago that I will never fill my father's beer drinking footsteps and that's something I'm comfortable with. That beer is what I imagine sewer water tastes like.

So do yourself a favor — stop pretending you're sober and just accept the truth. If you've had double digit beers, you've probably drunk.

Stop lying to yourself; you're drunk

I am very disappointed in the Mustang Daily's decision not to endorse a candidate this year. I don't necessarily believe it is the Daily's place, or any newspaper for that matter, to take political sides. However, I think that denouncing all of the candidates has done the school a disservice and could discourage voting participation.

If the decision was not to endorse a single candidate, I understand, but I could have settled for best two out of three. And I think we all know who the two would be. Experience does matter.

"Denise Nilan
Response to "Mustang Daily endorses no one this year"

The Mustang Daily is a student newspaper that tries to maintain a level of credibility among its readers. Endorsing candidates can be seen as a breach of tradition rather simply chapters this credibility when no single candidate can come close to. (For when some distance themselves from the pack). The Daily took the correct position here. I've been trying to find the difference between all three candidates for awhile now. I'm not so fancy shirts and headlines don't affect me like they used to. In the end, I decided to write in the names of various Muppet characters who also show admirable values. I'm pulling for Foxy Be:ar '09/10

"John Swanson
Response to a comment on "Mustang Daily endorses no one this year"

"Are my regular republican criti­ ics reaching for their inhalers yet!?"

Ali, stereotyping What a wonder­ ful thing It is. I guess you were try­ ing to label all Republicans as neurotics. I suppose this was meant as an insult, but they say that needs will inherit the earth so I take it as a compliment. Next time, stick with the politics and leave the attack at home or on the Internet. (As we all know the Internet is a very serious place. Seriously.)

"Dave
Response to "Obama: Supreme Court choice to influence policy for decades"

Globallists trying to save the world, not take it over

Colin McKim, are you really that dense? Do you honestly believe there is a secret organization of so-called "globalists" that are attempting to infiltrate all major governments with a secret agenda to unify the world under one oppressive and freedom-quashing rule? No, I thought Nemo was paranoid.

To be blunt, I was shocked and ashamed to see that you're an Environmental Management and Protection major, for I am also one. You, better than anyone, should know that the Kyoto Proto­ col was established for a pretty dumb good reason — to work as a whole (yes, believe it or not, there are other countries out there) as inhabitants of the Earth to pro­ cure, nourish, manage and protect (cough cough) all that important stuff (like air) so that we won't run ourselves into extinction within 50 years. I'm not sure how you twisted a global effort to save the environment (again, cough cough) into a backdoor attempt of gov­ ernment officials to take over the world.

Maybe you're right, though. I mean, we can't hear what government officials say behind closed doors. I'll bet an early 1990's pop-culture dialect to demonstrate this possibility: "Gee Obama, what do you want to do tonight?"

"The same thing we do every night, Biden...try to take over the world!!!"

Patrick Fina
environmental management and protection freshman

Sex column doesn't cater to majority of students

Editor, I'm not sure why we need this "LGBTQ-friendly" sex column in our paper. For one, there seems like there is barely any demand for it. I bet not even a fraction of a percent of Cal Poly students identify themselves like that (gay), so where's the market for this column? Secondly, the whole thing reeks of affirmative action, like maybe Sean Penn or Perez Hilton threatened to sue the college if we didn't meet a "Gay Quota," for voice in our paper. Fourthly, along the same lines, this is what I think is known as "re­ verse discrimination." the whole column she is complaining about the preconceived notions that "we" have against her, but that whole idea is based on the ones she has about us! Talk about "progres­ sive" being a crime when you are (really a man) asked to write a "straight" sex column? Liberals would throw a fit.

Ryan Moriarty
physics senior

letters to the editor

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Help Wanted

VIDEO EDITOR: You will work with a Creative Director on shows for a variety of clients, creating content for a diverse range of audiences. Experience editing for different marketing campaigns is a plus. Pay starts at $9/hr. For more information, email ecom@calpoly.edu for an interview or questions.

L. A. Summer Day Camps

DAILY CAMP NEEDS SUMMER STAFF: San Fernando and Conejo Valleys. $12-$15.80/hr. Contact will be through email.

Announcements

HELP WANTED: Local company seeking a Flash Designer. Email info@designco.com for more information.

Pop Culture Shock Therapy by Doug Bratton

WANTED: HELP TO PRINT YOUR SHIRTS! Bring your idea, we'll make it happen. 12 or 200 - get shirts fast and hassle-free!

Edited by Will Shultz No. 0403

The New York Times

Crossword

Across
1. Something to be respected (5)
9. "Be The Tie" (Christian hymn) (5)
12. "Looking for trouble?" (5)
15. "Waltz on an ocean cruise." (5)
16. "A tie-dye hair style." (5)
17. "With 4-Down, a leader with a greater degree." (5)
18. "With a Down, a smoker’s fee." (5)
19. "Waltz" (or visit) as a vis-a-vis May Day." (5)
20. "Syllable repeated after a vowel." (5)
22. "Over" responsibility." (5)
23. "Refine.# (5)
24. "It has energy in reserve." (5)

Down
28. It may be cracked open (4)
29. Entry award winning Ward" (4)
32. "Little ones." (4)
34. "Aching." (4)
35. "He may be out now." (4)
37. "Confidential..." (4)
38. "Vantage point." (4)
39. "Honor." (4)
42. "Setting for a plate?" (4)
44. "Wintry stretch." (4)
45. "With a Down, a smoker’s fee." (4)
46. "Without a fee..." (4)

Clue:
"The Trial" (Alma mater of novelist Don Hamilton!) (2004 movie)

References:
1. "Falling Man" (Christian hymn)
2. "Counselors, lifeguards & much more." (2004 movie)
3. "Moriarty, to Toulouse-Lautrec" (2004 movie)
4. "Scuba tank" (2004 movie)
5. "Hammered" (2004 movie)
6. "Lau" (2004 movie)
7. "Vatican Gardens" (2004 movie)
9. "Lotus" (2004 movie)
10. "Lark" (2004 movie)
11. "One of the worst in the world." (2004 movie)
15. "One of the worst in the world." (2004 movie)
20. "Gone."
23. "One of the worst in the world." (2004 movie)
28. "Hammered" (2004 movie)
34. "Anchors." (2004 movie)
42. "Anchors." (2004 movie)
44. "Anchors." (2004 movie)
SPO R T S

Cal Poly sophomore infielder J.J. Thompson throws to first base during the Mustangs’ 7-4 victory over San Francisco last Sunday.

MUSTANG DAILY

Baseball

Cal Poly and Fullerton square off

MUSTANG DAILY STAFF REPORT

It doesn’t get any closer to a must win series than this for the Cal Poly baseball team. The Mustangs (32-13, 10-5 Big West Conference) are in a dogfight for second place in the Big West and are standing in their way — not only in the conference but also of a possible postseason berth which will visit Bagger Stadium this weekend.

Cal State Fullerton (34-12, 12-6) will face off against the Mustangs tonight at 6 p.m. in a three game series.

The Titans, currently No. 6 in the Baseball America Top 25 polls tied with Cal Poly for second place in the conference, have a championship pedigree. The Titans have made 30 NCAA Regional appearances and are four-time national champions.

Meanwhile Cal Poly has never been invited to the postseason at the Division I level. A series win over Cal State Fullerton could go a long way towards guaranteeing the Mustangs their first regional berth.

With an NCAA RPI ranking of 50th according to Boytoworld.com, Cal Poly may be on the bubble for a regional selection despite being ranked 12th in the polls. Cal State Fullerton is currently second in the RPI behind North Carolina.

A series win against the Titans would likely boost the Mustangs off the bubble for the 64-team regional field.

Cal Poly is playing without freshman second baseman Matt Jaggi who is out for the year after a broken clavicle suffered in a collision against San Francisco last Saturday.

Cal State Fullerton brings a strong pitching staff to match up against the Mustangs high-octane offense. They are led by starting pitchers Daniel Renken (6-2, 2.27 ERA), Jose Ramirez (5-3, 2.89 ERA) and Tyler Pill (8-1, 3.21 ERA). The Titans won two of their last three games on Goodwin Field in Fullerton and hold a 53-30 advantage in the all-time series.

Ramirez suspended 50 games for drug violation

Beth Harris and Ronald Blum
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Manny Ramirez joined a growing lineup of All-Stars who’ve experienced discipline after tests for the dreadlocked-dugger-brushed for 50 games by a sport that cannot shake free from scandal.

The Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder was suspended by Major League Baseball for a drug violation, adding a further stamp to what will forever be known as the Steroid Era.

“It’s dark day for baseball and certainly for this organization,” Dodger general manager Ned Colletti told reporters on the field at Dodger Stadium. “This organization will never tolerate anything that isn’t clean.

Ramirez said he did not take steroids and was given medication by a doctor that contained a banned substance. A person familiar with the details of the suspension said Ramirez used the female fertility drug HCG, or human chorionic gonadotropin.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the banned substance wasn’t announced.

“As tough as it is for us, it’s pretty tough for Manny, too,” Dodgers manager Joe Torre said. “I know he’s the one that did the wrong thing and nobody is trying to cover that up, but it’s still something that I know he’s sorry about.”

HCG is popular among steroid users because it can mitigate the side effects of ending a cycle of the drug. The body may stop producing testosterone when users go off steroids, which can cause sperm counts to decrease and testicles to shrink.

Ramirez’s suspension was based not on a spring training urinalysis test result but rather evidence obtained afterward, a second person familiar with the suspension said, speaking on condition of anonymity because those details were not released. MLB had concluded the spring test was positive, but the person said the players association would have challenged the result because of “testing issues.”

Ranked 17th on the career home run list with 533, Ramirez became the most prominent baseball player to be penalized for drugs. His ban came three months after Alex Rodriguez admitted using steroids, and at a time when Barry Bonds is under federal indictment and Roger Clemens is involved in a federal grand jury to determine whether he lied when he told Congress he never used steroids or human growth hormone.

Ad Migiel Tejeda was sentenced in March to one year of probation after pleading guilty in federal court to misleading Congress about the use of performance-enhancing drugs.

No matter which way baseball turns, the legitimacy of many of its recent home run and pitching records is being questioned. Stunggers Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa have been tainted by steroid allegations, Rafael Palmeiro tested positive for a banned drug and Jose Canseco said he used them.

In every case, players once believed to be locks for the Hall of Fame may now be locked out.

“You can’t argue the greatest pitcher of our era, arguably the two greatest players of our era and now another very, very good player be under this cloud of suspicion and not feel like it has ruined it for everybody,” Atlanta star Chipper Jones said.

“Just what are you going to do? You can’t be born in a different era. It’s the Steroid Era,” he said.

Colletti and Torre said they found out about Ramirez’s suspension during an early morning phone call from team owner Frank McCourt.

Bonds were both surprised and saddened at the news.

Torre spoke to the rest of the team during a closed-door meeting before batting practice.

“The mood was sad in the clubhouse,” he said. “You can’t have someone who’s as much of an impact player and personality as Manny missing without it affecting people.”

The 36-year-old Ramirez used to make amends right away, telling the Dodgers and fans he was sorry for “this whole situation.”

“Being a baseball player is a privilege, a responsibility, a physician for a personal health issue. He gave me a medication, not a steroid, which he thought was OK to give me,” Ramirez said in a statement issued by the players’ union.

Under the policy that mistake is now being questioned, Ramirez said he did not take steroids but went cold-turkey and needed HCG to get his levels back to normal. I had to use it when I quit steroids cold-turkey,” Canseco, who pleaded guilty last November to a misdemeanor of trying to bring HCG across the Mexican border into the United States illegally, told the AP “I had to go to a doctor to get and get my levels back.”

Because MLB imposed the suspension as required by the drug agreement, the Dodgers cannot further discipline Ramirez. He is allowed to work out with the Dodgers but must be out of uniform when the stadium gates open for games.

Ramirez was not mentioned in the Mitchell Report. MLB’s official report on drug use, and there had not been whispers that he was among the supposed players at the center of the report.

“It’s kind of shocking that he got caught up in anything, honestly. Manny is a real person, he’s a pretty bright guy. And he’s definitely aware of a lot of things that he tries to act like he’s completely oblivious to,” said Cincinnati pitcher Bronson Arroyo, Ramirez’s former Indians teammate.

Ramirez’s agent, Scott Boras, and the players’ association had gathered materials for a possible appeal to an arbitrator, but Ramirez decided not to file one because he didn’t want to risk missing significant time in the second half of the season, the person familiar with details of the suspension said.

The union said merely that he waived his right to contest the suspension.

Reaction to Ramirez’s ban came swiftly, from major league clubhouses to the White House.

“It’s a tragedy. It’s a shame. My sense is, it’s a great embarrassment on Major League Baseball,” White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said.

The penalty left the best team in the majors without its driving force and free spirit for nearly one-third of the season.

Ramirez’s suspension began Thursday, a day after the Dodgers broke the modern major league record for a home run streak, opening the season 13-0. Barring any postponements, he will be able to return to the Dodgers for the July 3 game at San Diego. Ramirez will lose $7,650,273 of his $25 million salary.

Rodriguez and Ramirez are the two highest-paid players in the majors. With this suspension, six of the top 17 home run hitters in history now have been covered by the cloud of performance-enhancing drugs.

Los Angeles Dodgers fans Joe Valencia shows support for Manny Ramirez outside Dodger Stadium on Thursday afternoon.

Baseball commissioner Bud Selig couldn’t comment on the suspension because of provisions of the management-union drug agreement, spokesman Rich Levin said.

Ramirez became the fourth player suspended this year under the major league program. Following Philadelphia Phillies reliever J.C. Romero, Yankees pitcher Sergio Mitre and San Francisco pitcher Kevin Pichardo.

Los Angeles avoided a return to the field with stolen seats at Dodger Stadium “Mannywood” in its honor. Hours after the suspension, the team removed a reference to those seats from its Dodger Stadium “Mannyworld” in his honor.

“Unfortunate,” baseball commissioner Bud Selig said. “The thing that was toughest for Manny is how he disappointed everybody. He said ‘he loved it here, and he loves how the fans get turned on by him. He was devastated.”

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